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History of Ypsilanti -
Erastus W. Basom

The writer of this part of this narrative wishes it distinctly understood that he does not vouch for the correctness of these statements, having obtained them from statistics and other sources as best he could dating back to the first white settler in Ypsilanti in the year 1823, while Michigan was yet a territory. And as near as the writer has been able to learn, a man by the name of Benjamin Woodruff was the first purchaser of land from the government in the year 1823, said to be located very near where Mr. Forrester now resides, known in those days as Woodruff's Grove. It is said he built there a house, and moved his family into it July 6th, 1823, expecting he had started the village of Ypsilanti there, but he seemed doomed to disappointment. I will tell you later.

The next buyer was Titus Brunson, who bought at or near the grove in 1823, expecting

that would be the real Ypsilanti, which soon proved a mistake for on the first of June 1825 the road from Detroit to Chicago was surveyed by a United States Commissioner, assisted by Orring Ridson, a surveyor, living at Saline Village and they established the Road where it now is, leaving Woodruff's Grove out in the cold. The next settler at the Grove was a man by the name of John Bryant. He and his family arrived at the Grove Oct. 23rd, 1823 and in 1824 purchased land, erected a house and moved into it December 31st, of the same year.

I will here state what was said by Mrs. Bryant, one of the settlers at the Grove in 1823, she said it was amusing to hear the corn mills in operation every morning and described them thus: A hole was burned in the top of a sound oak stump after scraping this clean from coal, a stick about six

feet long and eight inches in diameter was rounded at one end and suspended by a spring pole directly over the stump, a hole was bored through this pestle for handles, and the mill was done. A man would pound a peck of corn in half an hour, so that half of it would go through a sieve, so we see that in this case the old saying is verified that "Necessity is the Mother of invention."

Mr. Bryant was a carpenter by trade and it is said he built the county court house in Ann Arbor in the year 1834. And it is said that a man by the name of Robert Flemming built in this county the first saw mill on Section twenty-five, Ann Arbor Township in the summer of 1824. It was located on a small creek running through the county near Ann Arbor, named Flemmings Creek.

Harvey H. Snow was the tenth buyer

and the owner of Snow's Landing now called "Belleville." This settler disposed of his interest to Abel Millington in 1825 or 1826 and moved farther west.

George W. Noyse was a settler near the Grove in the year 1823, but he moved to Ann Arbor in 1824 and two years later was the principle mover in building the first gristmill in Ann Arbor. But misfortune seemed to overtake him, while he was assisting at the raising of a house owned by Andrew Nowland of Ann Arbor who some of the present settlers will remember, this man, Noyse, got killed by accident.

The first school established in Ypsilanti was organized and taught by Miss Olive Gorton daughter of Job and Sarah Gorton in a small building which stood where the Occidental Hotel now stands, in the summer and fall of 1825 and among her pupils was Lieut. Mortimer Rosencranz whose remains rest in our

Highland Cemetery. Miss Gorton after the close of her school that year married Lyman Graves, and made her home three miles south of Ypsilanti, where she spent her life. They raised quite a family but most of them passed away. There is one son and his family living now in Ypsilanti City, who is a very worthy citizen and has held several very important offices and is considered a good business man. His name is Albert Graves, living on Washington Street, Ypsilanti City.

I will speak of some of the present citizens of Ypsilanti and what they have done for their home town. I will refer first to Mr. Daniel Quirk, Senior, as doing a great thing for the city and surrounding country when he built that building known as the vault in Highland Cemetery and donated it to the city, which was certainly a very generous act and his memory will be cherished by the rising generation as one of the most respected citizens of Ypsilanti City. He is now in his ninety-second year

and president of the First National Bank, which position he has held for several years. He is quite smart and active for a man of his years and his memory is considered very good. I will speak of one more of Ypsilanti's business men who has passed away. But he will be remembered by most of the present citizens. He was Doctor Rexford who was business straight through. He has left sons who are very much like him that respect. I will now speak of Mrs. John Starkweather and her generous donation to the city, one gift being the Ladies Library building, another was the chapel in Highland Cemetery which was built by her and given to the city which is a great thing for the city and the surrounding country. In a great many ways I feel as though the citizens all must feel very grateful and thankful for these donations, although she has gone to the vale beyond. There is yet one more to mention

I hear the water fountain in front of the Savings Bank, was a gift also, I believe. I will speak of another one of the present business men of the city who is Mr. Robert W. Hemphill, Sr. Who is now president of the Savings Bank in Ypsilanti City, which position he has held sometime. He has been concerned in the banking business ever since I knew him which is near fifty years and is a straight business man.

It is said that in 1825 a man by the name of Rawson operated a sawmill at Snows Landing now called Belleville. I learn from statistics that a man by the name of John Stuart, it is said, built the first saw mill in Ypsilanti near where the Woolen Factory now stands in June 1826.

The first town meeting was held in 1827 Doctor Millington was elected supervisor and Benjamin Woodruff, Justice of the Peace,

it is to be remembered that Michigan is yet a territory and was not admitted as a state until 1837.

I learn from statistics also that a man by the name of Godfrey had a trading post established with the Indians at or near the Grove as early as the year 1823 carrying on a good trade with the Indians for their furs for it is said they were numerous. I know they were were numerous when I first saw Ypsilanti in the year 1833, a man by the name of William Harwood who will be remembered by some of the present citizens, owned quite a tract of land on the east side of the river and also a grist mill standing near where the present Huron mill now stands, which it is said was built by Benjamin Woodruff in 1824 and he sold it to Harwood, who was the owner of it in 1833, when I first saw Ypsilanti, and Mr. George McDugal was the miller who has passed to the other shore.

But he left two sons who live near Ypsilanti in the town of Superior who is known by the present citizens of Ypsilanti. In the year 1835 Mr. Harwood made a deal with old Mr. John Gilbert disposing of all his interests on the east side of the river mill and all; I will tell you more later about this deal and about this mill property. I will now say that old Mr. John Gilbert built the present Huron Mill on or near the same ground where the old mill stood, that he bought of Mr. Harwood. This old Mr. Gilbert that I refer to was the father of young John Gilbert, named the same, who died a few years ago and his widow still lives in Ypsilanti City.

I will give a sketch of what I know of Ypsilanti when I first saw it in the year 1833 and who the settlers were at that time and what condition the little village was in what I first saw it as near as I can remember.

I came with my father and his family from the State of New York, Steuben County, arriving

at Ypsilanti, June 18th, 1833, My father brought a pair of horses and a wagon with him and we came from Buffalo to Detroit by boat on Lake Erie and from Detroit we came with our own team to Ypsilanti as I have said, June 18th, 1833.

We found no bridge across the Huron River at Ypsilanti, but we were ferried over on a flat bottom boat, horses, wagon and all, by a man by the name of Stout.

I will name some of the inhabitants of the little village as I remember them. A man by the name of Charles Stuck who operated an ashery on the south side of Congress Street near where Mr. Demarsh now has a livery barn and he was the father of Al Stuck who is now a citizen of Ypsilanti, who is well known there by the present citizens.. And farther west at the corner of Huron and Congress streets where the Savings Bank now is, that corner was owned and occupied by Chester Perry and he kept what was called a

Tavern in those days; and farther west on Congress street is what is known as Kings Corners which was occupied by the forefathers of the present King who is there now. It has been handed down so that the King Family hold it yet. And farther to the west there was various offices and stores. There were two men by the name of Lane, both lawyers, and they were brothers and their first names were Marcus and Charles Lane. They had an office on that side of the street. Chancey Joslyn was in their office with them at that time then a young man, reading the law with them. And farther west on the south side of Congress street was two men by the name of Moore and McAllister, keeping a dry goods store. And on the corner of that block where the National Bank now is. It was at that time owned and occupied by Elijah Grant, who kept a dry goods store also. He was the father of Ed. Grant

now one of the citizens of Ypsilanti. That block comprised about all on the south side of Congress street as for business.

I will go back to the river and tell something about the Northside of Congress street. The first building next to the river was quite a large structure and it was there when I came to Ypsilanti, and was said to have been built by Deacon Post, who was a hatter by trade, and he carried on business there.

It was known in those days as the "Nunnery Building."

We will go west to the west side of Huron street and there on the corner where now is the Kishlar store, we found Arden H. Ballard and James Edmunds running a General store; and a little west of them, we found Julius Movious and a man named Goddard running a Hardware store. Still farther west we find a jewelry store run by a man by the name of Hedding and a grocery kept by Mr. Levi Haynes, and one run by a man

by the name of McGrady and Miss Fanny Nichols, a milliner, a sister of Mr. James Nichols, who will be remembered as the father of the Pittsfield farmer who was found in the Detroit river murdered by Edward Asher, who is now serving time in Jackson prison for the crime.

Mr. Walter B. Hewitt run a large boot and shoe store near the west end of the block right north of the First National Bank. That corner is still owned by the Hewitt family. In the year 1851 fire took everything clean from that block in the shape of buildings, excepting two and one of them is on the corner of Washington and Pearl streets, the old shop where Mr. Minor worked at blacksmithing for years and the other was a small house near where the present postoffice now stands owned by Mr. Sears Loveridge. The fire took everything clear to the river, the old Nunnery building with the rest. The law

fraternity consisted of Elias Skinner, Grove Spencer and Marcus and Charles Lane.

The doctors when I came here were Doctor Millington, Dr. Morse and Dr. Fairchilds; and Richard Martin was the city baker. Gilmen Davis was the cabinet maker and later was the undertaker of the town, he was the father of Mr. Ira Davis, now a citizen of Ypsilanti City. Ira Weed was the officiating clergyman of the Presbyterian faith. The first saddler was Abram Sage and the first gunsmith was Ormsby. Mr. Joseph Stockdale was the first wagon maker in the little village of the northside of Congress street but the fire of 1851 burnt his shop which was a big loss to him. He, like the rest of the first settlers, has now passed away, leaving two or three sons living in or near Ypsilanti, who are well known in the city and community. There is no doubt but that Mr. Jonathan Morton

was the first dry goods merchant in Ypsilanti. Mr. Morton will be remembered by many of the present citizens for he lived many years south of the city on the farm now owned and occupied by James Homes, whose wife was Mr. Morton's daughter. Mr. Morton and his wife both died on that farm. I lived neighbor to them and was one of the pall bearers at the funeral of both. I think I am right in saying that Mr. Morton was the first dry goods merchant in Ypsilanti, while Michigan was a territory. He told me himself that he got his goods from Detroit on a flat bottom boat on the Huron River and his place of business was on the corner of Washington and Pearl streets.

I will refer to one of the officiating lawyers, Mr. Grove Spencer, when I first saw this little village of Ypsilanti, he was the father of the present citizen, known well in this community by the name of Richard Spencer, the stock buyer. His

father's family when I came here lived just east of the little village on a farm that is still known to many as the Spencer farm. I will tell some more about the citizens and their occupation. A man by the name of Jack Wheelock kept a livery stable on Huron street, south of Congress. The first sheriff of the county, after Michigan became a state, in 1837, was William Anderson, living just south of Ann Arbor village at that time, on what was known as the south Ann Arbor Road. Mr. Mark Norris was postmaster at Ypsilanti and Hon. Chancey Joslyn was the first Mayor of the City of Ypsilanti, after it was incorporated as a city in 1857, and in 1863 was elected Probate Judge of Washtenaw County, and later in 1878, was elected Circuit Judge of the District. He has passed away leaving three sons and two daughters, one of the sons Mr. Frank Joslyn, is an attorney, residing in

Ypsilanti City, practicing his profession.

A man by the name of James Turner run a stage coach from Detroit to Ypsilanti and Saline, when I first remember Ypsilanti, and a man by the name of Anthony Collins was the village drayman, he had a two wheeled dray and a big dorrel horse that was inclined to bite people when they came near his head and he was obliged to keep him muzzled so he could not hurt the citizens. And a colored man and his wife, by the name of Wells, carried on a barber shop on the north side of Congress street. In the basement of the Ballard and Edmunds store on the corner where Kishlar's store now is, there were two taylor shops. John Hawkins run a shop on the south side of Congress street and the other man run a shop on the north side of Congress street and his name was Mr. Wilkerson, and has long since passed to the other shore. But he has a daughter now living in Ypsilanti whose name is Mrs. Janet

Campbell. I well remember a restaurant kept by a Mr. Towner on the west side of Washington street and on the south side of Congress street he also kept some liquors for sale and was grandfather to Tracy Towner, who is now an attorney in Ypsilanti city and well known there as a business man and lawyer. And Mr. Abriel Hawkins kept a tavern on the corner of Washington and Congress streets where the union block now stands, who will be remembered by some of the citizens as the father of Walter and Fred Hawkins. The old gentlemen kept the hotel and he furnished his table with plenty of good victuals to eat and less style, which is quite the reverse of most of the hotels nowadays,--- they have more style than victuals. The old Mr. Howland ran a tannery near where his son John Howland, runs one now, north of the woolen mill. And a man by the name of Norton ran a distillery near there at the North part of the little vil-

lage.

I will now come back to Congress and tell you that a man by the name of Griffin kept what was called a select school in a part of the building known as the Hunnery, owned by Deacon Post, who was the father of Hon. Samuel Post of Detroit. And on the south side of Congress street west of Martin Dawsons feed store I think a family lived and owned the premises by the name of McKinstry and I think it is yet occupied by some of the family the house stands back from the street a short distance. And still farther west where Mr. Curtis' building now stands was a building known as the Red Schoolhouse, where Priest Weed often preached to the settlers of the little village and all who came from the surrounding country with their ox teams to hear him. And still farther west along Chicago Avenue on the place now owned and occupied by Mr. Oliver Ainsworth, when I

first saw Ypsilanti, it was then owned and occupied by Mr. Benjamin Woodruff, the founder of the Grove, as I told you. He was disappointed there and he moved his family here, and he and his wife both died here and his homestead passed into the hands of a man by the name of Alfred Hunter who purchased the Huron Mill of Mr. Gilbert. The man Hunter, it is said, failed and the mill passed into the hands of Nathan Pollett who will be remembered by some of the citizens of Ypsilanti and from him in time, it was purchased by the present owners. I said I would tell more about the Harwood and Gilbert deal later. Mr. Gilbert traded him a tract of land laying west on the Chicago road towards Saline and Mr. Harwood moved his family on to it and farmed it and there died and some of his descendants still live there on the same land.

I will not go from King's Corners

south and mention some of the settlers as I remember them going south of the then village. Mr. Peter Miller lived and owned the premises on the west side of Huron Street where his son Henry Miller now lives. Mr. Peter Miller worked at the masons trade, but he and his wife have passed to the other shore, as has most all of the business men that were here when I first saw Ypsilanti. Still farther south lived Mr. VanCleaf on the hill known to the present citizens as the Watling Hill. Still farther south on what is known as the west Monroe Road we find a man living by the name of Joseph Burt on the West side of the road on the farm known as the Hammond farm at the present time. We come next to the brick house farm at the forks of the road now owned and occupied by George Crane, which was owned and occupied by a man by the name of William Rollo who was considered quite a singer and he taught singing schools winters and he was a good singer.

Taking the west road at the forks by the brick house, just south of the creek on the Hill we find a man by the name of Churchill who bought his land from the government. It is the farm where the house burned a year or two ago that was owned at that time by Samuel Rogers. The next farm on Stoney Creek Road was owned by Mr. Glover, father of Henry Glover, who is now a citizen of the City of Ypsilanti, and is one of the men who has helped to make Ypsilanti what it is now with money and personal council, he being a good business man. The farm is now owned and occupied by Seeley Davis and the farm next south was then owned by Mr. Glover, a brother of Henry Glover's father, and it passed into the hands of Mr. Palmer Elliott, who was grandfather to the present occupant at the present time. The old gentlemen and his wife both died on that farm years ago.

The next farm south when I first remember it was owned and occupied by an old gentlemen generally called, Capt. Macy. His family consisted of a wife, one son and one daughter, the present owners purchased it from Mr. Macy some years ago. The Macy family have all passed away at different dates, and the next farm where Mr. Neat lives now was then owned by a family named Densmore who also owned the land where Mr. Frank White lives and John Seaver. The Densmore people owned the three eighty acres but no buildings, except on the one where Mr. Neat lives now. There is but one relative of the Densmore family in this part of the country that I know of and that is Cord Densmore, a grandson to the old man Densmore, who was called Doctor at the time I first remember him. And on the west side of the road where Mr. Rodney Moory now lives it was owned and occupied by Mr. John Hammond, and where Mr. Howlett now lives that place

was occupied by a Mr. White and his family, and the Hammond family, Hohn's relatives, owned all the west side of the road as far south as is now known as Newton Crittendens land including the Horace Laflin farm where he now lives. It was all owned by the Hammond family when I first remember it in 1833. And the farm that Newton Crittendens family now owns and occupies by a Mr. Martin Doty. And the next farm south was occupied by a man by the name of Seth Strong, but it was purchased by Mr/ James Lowden, Sr., in the spring of eighteen hundred and thirty five. It is now owned by the heirs of the son, Hon. James L. Lowden, Jr., who has just passed to the other shore and the next settler south on the west side of the road on the farm known as the Andrew Miller farm, there was then living on it a man by the name of Mr. Luke, but he died there soon after I came. There was no settler south then till the farm where Mr. Barr now lives. A man and his wife lived

there and they owned the farm and his name was Daniel Bird, and the next settler south was Mr. James Miller on the south side of Stoney Creek. It is the farm that Levi Rogers left to his widow and she has sold it to a man by the name of Wright. Mr. Miller was Andrew Miller's father and he claimed when he first moved there in 1831 that one day he saw a big bear come and take a good size shoat of his out of the yard, and he did not care to hinder him as he had no gun. Mr. Daniel W. Russell and wife was here when I came and they lived on the little place joining Mr. Barr's land on the south, the same ground that is now called the Presbyterian Parsonage. Mrs. Russell was a sister to James Miller and the little place on the rise of ground south of the Rogers Farm where Mrs. Albright now lives, was then owned and occupied by old Mrs. Miller who was the mother of James Miller and Mrs. Russell; another daughter lived with the old lady there at the

time I remember them but they have all passed over to the other shore.

The next settler was on the first farm south of the school house now, but then there was no school house, that settler's name was Mike Warner, a young married man. He staid a year or two and then sold out and moved to Monroe and the next settler was a man by the name of Howard. I think he was a bachelor, but he sold out in a year or two. The buyer will be remembered by the settlers. The buyer was Jacob Dancingburg. He and his wife passed away as most of the old settlers have. But there is some of their descendants left, Mrs. Thomas Talliday is a daughter, also Mrs. Henry Stumphenhusan of Augusta, and Mrs. Frank Fletcher of Ypsilanti City.

The next settler, at that time, was Hiram Thompson, Sr., on the old farm where his son, Hiram, lives now. There is also one daughter living in Ypsilanti City who

is Mrs. Anson Williams. The old people and one daughter have passed away. The daughter was Mrs. William Martin, whose husband was a son of Byard Martin and a brother of Jacob Martin now living in the City of Ypsilanti.

I will here speak of some more of the early settlers, of Augusta, who I first remember. I will first mention Mr. John Minzey then lived with his family on the farm now owned by Hiram Brown. Mr. Minzey sold it to John B. Stark who will be remembered by some of the present citizens. Mr. Stark sold it to the present owner, and he and most of his family have passed away. I think there is one son and one daughter still living of the Stark family. Mr. Minzey then settled on the farm where his two daughters now live, right south of Charles Rogers in Augusta Township. Mr. Minzey was the father of Redner Minzey who was well known by many of the present settlers who with his father and mother

have passed to the vale beyond, where we must all go. I will also mention Mr. Robert Reynolds who has long since passed away, he was the father of John Reynolds now living in Augusta Township.

I will now speak of the south east part of the township of Augusta. I first will mention a man known as Captain Hardy that settled on the south east quarter of section thirty-four and he run a saw mill located at the junction of Paint Creek and Stoney Creek in the year 1831 and he lived and died there and is buried in what is known as the Childs Cemetery, and Aaron Childs was one of the first settlers of Augusta township in 1831, and he was the father of W.E. Childs of Ann Arbor City at the present time and the first town meeting was held at the house of Aaron Childs in the year 1836. Steven Mead was elected supervisor. Aaron Childs, Township Clerk, David Hardy, Justice of the Peace, Hiram H. Warner, Treasurer.

I will say in regard to section 16 of the Town of Augusta that in 1840, it was a perfect swamp, but it had the best white wood timber on it of any section of land in the county but it was quite a chore to get it out, it was nothing strange to upset a load from one to three times in getting it to hard land.

I will mention some of the settlers that came in the fall of 1833 and settled on the west side of the township now known as Augusta, but was at that time called Ypsilanti including the town of York and Pittsfield at that time, they were all called Ypsilanti Township. Mr. Andrew Rogers came with his family and settled east of the Redner school house on the farm now owned by the only living son of Andrew Rogers; his family consisted of eight grown up children. When he died about forty years ago there were five sons and three daughters, the oldest daughter died in the year 1872, and was the wife of the

writer of this narrative. The mother and the other five children have passed to the other shore, at different dates, leaving the two youngest children of the family here, who is Charles, as I have said, on the old homestead and the daughter who is Mrs. Josephine Kenyon, a widow. There was other families who came there at the same time that Mr. Rogers did and settled near him. One was Mr. Peter Dancingburgh, who was the father of William Dancingburgh, who will be remembered by most of the present citizens and his mother who was familiarly known as Aunt Betsey. She was not easily frightened but one afternoon near night, as she was going home from the west, from some neighbors, carrying a piece of fresh meat for her supper the wolves were quite thick here then and some of them were very near Aunt Betsey and on this occasion wanted to taste of the meat and she being a very good woman and tender hearted

gave it to them and then skipped for home as fast as she could, but she had to walk some logs at that time to keep out of the water.

The next one I will mention coming at or about the same fall 1833, was Mr. Aaron Alber, who bought the land from the government right east of Charles Rogers on the south side of the road where Mr. Freeman owns and lives now. Mr. Alber lived there a number of years and then sold it to Mr. Holland Williams, father of Jerome Williams, who is now living just east of the old home on Section sixteen in the Town of Augusta. Mr. Alber then bought a short distance west of the city of Ypsilanti, the farm that is now owned and occupied by Mr. Dell Wayne, and there Mr. Alber died, nearly forty years ago and his wife died there also a few years later. Their family consisted of two sons and one daughter who was the wife of Lawson Rogers, who was the oldest brother of Charles

Rogers, referred to before in this sketch. The two sons are yet living, one at Lansing, Michigan, and the other at St. Paul, Minnesota, I think. Next I will mention Mr. Coon Redner, coming in the fall of 1833, purchasing the farm from the government that Norman Redner has recently sold to Joseph Rockwood, it being the old homestead of Redners, located near Stoney Creek Creamery. Mr. Coon Redners family consisted of four sons and four daughters, who have all passed to the other shore, but the two youngest daughters, one of them is Mrs. Harriett Platt and the other is Mrs. Matilda Hinkley, wife of Franklin Hinkley, who I will refer to later in this writing. I will now speak of one more family that moved into Augusta Township soon after I came here that was Mr. Robert Campbell, who purchased the farm that his son, Hon. John K. Campbell owns and lives on at the present time. A man by the name of Wiley sold it to

Mr. Campbell when the country was nearly a forest. Mr. Campbell's family consisted of two daughters and six sons. The father, mother and two daughters and one of the sons have passed over the river, the remaining sons are William, Hon. Andrew, Gabriel, Robert and Hon. John K. Campbell, who are all well and favorably known in this county of Washtenaw. All Farmers, except Gabriel who is a professor in an Eastern College.

I will now pass back to the little village and on my way back I will say something in regard to the land I have said was owned by the Hammond family where Mr. Rodney^{Moory}/now lives that was sold by Mr. John Hammond to Mr. Henry Redner, who was the oldest son of Coon Redner who I have referred to in this narrative. And Henry Redner sold it to Mr. Benham who was the father of Horatio Benham and Mrs. Rodney Moory, who now owns and lives on the land owned by John Hammond. Mr. Hammond died in

Ann Arbor a few years ago. He has one daughter living in Ann Arbor at the present time who is the wife of Mr. Martin, a son of Mr. James Martin that moved into this country in 1825. I will tell you more about him later. I will now go back to the little village and mention some more of the citizens that I remember when I came.

Just east of the present bridge across the river on the south side of Congress street a Mr Emerick then run a grocery store who was the father of Benjamin Emerick who will be remembered by many of the present citizens who has passed to the vale beyond with most of his father's family. Benjamin left two sons, Fred who now owns his father's homestead and Frank the other son is circuit judge, living at Alpena, Michigan. I will refer now to Erastus Gamson who was then a young lad about twelve years old, as near as I remember, who was a clerk in the store of Ardon H. Ballard and Edmunds. But he will

be remembered as one of the most thorough business men of the city. But he, like the rest of the old settlers or most of them, have now gone to the other shore. There is still left two of his sons living in Ypsilanti who are well and favorably known throughout the county as good business men. I will now say a few words about Hon. E.P.Allen, elected mayor of Ypsilanti City and served two terms. He was elected to the state legislature in 1877 and again 1879. He also served in the civil war as captain, during the war in 1862. He now resides in the city of Ypsilanti where he is an attorney and practicing his profession there. I will speak of the First Presbyterian Church built in 1834. It is now occupied by Mr. George Lockridge, as a marble shop. I will go west towards Saline along what is known as the Chicago road after leaving the village going west. The first settler was at that time a man by the name of Lazalere which is now owned by Joseph Warner and the next

settler at that time in the year, 1833, was Mr. James Martin on the farm now owned and occupied by Mr. Charles Begole. Mr. Martin came in 1825 and raised quite a large family but most of them have passed away. There is one of his sons living in Ann Arbor and I think one daughter living in Detroit.

The next settler was a man by the name of Pardee, who lived on the south side of the road. There is no house on that side now. The buildings are now on the north side of the road and it is the same farm that Mr. Benjamin Miller lived on for a number of years who was well known by many of the present citizens. And the next settler was Mr. Wells Chamberlin on the hill where Deacon Canfield lived many years and died there a few years ago who was well known. And on the south side of the road we find a man living by the name of William Dye, his land going west to the north and south road.

The next settler was on the farm now known as the Roberts farm but it was then owned and occupied by James Loomis, who lived there a number of years, that I well remember, and the farm passed into the hands of a number of buyers and a man owned it by the name of Alexander Wallace and he sold it to Mr. Roberts. Mr. Wallace will be remembered by many in the community and by many of the citizens of Ypsilanti, for he and his wife and one daughter moved to Ypsilanti and the daughter was married to Mr. Crane who now runs a grocery store on Huron street, south of the postoffice. But Mr/ Wallace and his wife and the daughter have all passed away sometime ago.

I will say something more about Deacon Loomis, as he was generally called. Like the rest of the first settlers he owned oxen to do the work on the farm and to go to the market and to meeting. And in the spring of the year when they were first let loose on the commons they would start straight south

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four or five miles to the timber land to browse on the early buds and in doing so they would pass by my fathers farm. When Deacon Loomis wanted his oxen he had to foot it to the timber land to get them. But he always road one of his oxen back carrying a long beach whip and the ox was so accomedating that he would follow the other oxen so close that the Deacon could touch them up with his long whip and ride too. That was nice for him but not so nice for the ox, but he had to stand it just the same. Deacon Loomis was the father of Elisha Loomis now living in Ypsilanti on Congress St. I think all the rest of Deacon Loomis' family have passed to the other shore.

I will now speak of the next settler south of the Roberts farm that was here in 1833. It was then owned and occupied by a man by the name of Mr. Snow. It has now a brick house on it built by Mr. Sherman Hinkley who passed away a few years ago. That farm is now owned by one of his daughters

now living in California. Mr. Hinkley also owned the next farm south, known to many as the old homestead of Sherman Hinkley where he settled in 1831. That property is owned now by another daughter now living in Detroit City, who is now a widow. The other heirs of the estate was a son, an attorney, living in Ypsilanti, Franklin Hinkley, who I have referred to before in this narrative; and Mrs. Ann Cook, the widow of Hon. Peter Cook, who was a farmer in York township. And the next settler south of the Hinkley homestead was Mr. John Shipman when I came in 1833. The farm is now owned and occupied by Mr. Henry Schreen and farther south on the four corners on the west side of the road we find a family by the name of George Collins whose family consisted at the time of nine children and a wife. There were three sons and six daughters and the mother, two sons and three daughters have passed away, leaving one son and three daughters all living in Washtenaw County. The oldest

daughter now living is Mary C. Whiting, widow of Ralph C. Whiting. She is a graduate of the law department of the University of Michigan and a member of the Washtenaw County bar and practicing her profession at Ann Arbor, Michigan. Mr. George Collins died about sixty years ago. The son is Mr. William Collins a farmer, living a short distance east of Ypsilanti city on the motor line road towards Detroit. Another daughter named Abi, who is the mother of Hiram and William Fisk. These two sons are living at Ypsilanti at the present time. The other daughter is Mrs. Sophronia Wilber, wife of a farmer living in the Township of Superior, Washtenaw County.

I will now say a few words about the next farm west of the four corners on the town line road and the owner and occupant. When I first came to this country it was a man by the name of David J. Gilbert and he sold it to Porter Hinkley several years

later. Mr. Hinkley was not in Michigan for sometime after my father came here. He built the brick house where the oldest son and his mother now live. She is said to be quite smart for a person of ninety-three or ninety-four years old. Mr. Hinkley bought the Collins farm from the Collins heirs.

I will now say the next settler south of the Collins farm was my father who moved onto the eighty acres that he bought of a man by the name of Willard Hall. At the time we moved on to it near the last of June 1833, there was a log house on the Hall land and three or four acres had been ploughed. My father also bought two eighty acre lots of Mr. John Gilbert of Ypsilanti, the same man that made the deal with Mr. Harwood and got the Huron Mill in Ypsilanti of Mr. Harwood. My father lived and died there, in April 1873, and the children of his family were nine, but six passed away, and the other three yet live in Washtenaw County. Mr. Samuel Begole

owned eighty acres of land on Section two, joining my father's. He was here when we came then a young man but he married and lived on his farm until he retired from labor, moving to Ypsilanti in his old age and there died. He left one son and two daughters, all living in this county. The son is Milton Begole a farmer living in Pittsfield Township, one of the daughters lives in Ann Arbor City, the widow of Mr. Homer Cady, who has recently passed away, and the other daughter lives in Ypsilanti City, the wife of Chris Enders.

This country was level and slightly for a new country and it was not a strange thing to see the wild deer feeding with the settlers cattle on the prairie and quite often the bear could be seen loping over the plains and plenty of wild turkies and wolves also, the first two or three years after we came. I will mention some of the settlers who were here then. A family known by the name of Welch living on

the farm where William Miller lives now. The Welch family consisted of the old people, two sons and three daughters. The sons married and raised families. Some of them are yet here and some of them are west and some of them are in Chicago and some in Wyandotte and a son, of Horace Welch, Wallace, lives in Ann Arbor City, who is a veteran of the civil war and a man well thought of by his neighbors. The old gentlemen's other son, Owen, had but one son and he was killed in the civil war, that we had over forty years ago. Now the old stock has all passed away, the last one departed this life one year ago last winter, it was the youngest daughter and also the youngest of the family.

I will now speak of the settlers of the town of York. It was then called Ypsilanti Township for it must be remembered Michigan was yet a territory and remained such until the year 1837 and then it was admitted as a

state and the different towns were then named as I have said. I will tell you of the settlers of York as I remember them. When I first came to Michigan in 1833.

On section twelve there lived a man by the name of Hiram Fisk who bought his land from the government. He was not a married man at that time. His sister and her daughter kept house for him. He was quite a hunter and a good marksman, killing all kinds of game which was very plenty then. He will be remembered by many of the present citizens. I refer to the farm that Mr. Charles Thompson owns and occupies now. Mr. Fisk married after a time a lady by the name of Comstock and raised some children. I remember the oldest, a son, who married a girl I knew from childhood, a daughter of our nearest neighbor. They lived quite a number of years together. They raised two sons that are citizens of Ypsilanti city

and their mother lives there also. Her husband, Charles Fisk, met his death by falling from a building. The circumstance will be remembered by many of the present citizens. Mr. Hiram Fisk had two daughters, one was married, but both passed to the vale beyond the first of any of the Fisk family. The old people have gone also. Mr. Fisk had the misfortune when trimming a tree in his own dooryard to fall to his death, in the summer of 1872, and the old lady passed away since that date.

I will now speak of Mr. Cary Stark who lived and owned the farm now owned and occupied by Mr. Avery in York township. He had a large family of children but most of them, as well as the old people have passed away. I know one daughter who is now living in the town of York, who is the widow of Henry Coe, who I will speak of later

I will now tell you of the settler at that time, 1833, on the farm now owned and occupied by Mr. William Kelsey known as the Aaron R. Wheeler farm, it was owned and then occupied by a man and his family by the name of Alanson Snow. Mr. A.R.Wheeler came in the spring of 1834 and bought out Mr. Snow; and the Wheeler family lived and the old people died there. The only son of A.R.Wheeler, Charles, has left a son and daughter, who is the wife of Mr. William Kelsey, who is the present owner of the Snow farm; and his wife's mother, Mr. Charles Wheeler's widow, lives with him. I will now tell you about Mr. Snow, the first settler that Wheeler bought out in the spring of 1834. He was one of the first settlers in the township of York and known as the Indian hater, so called on account of his inveterate hatred of the Indians. When a lad the members of his father's family were massacred in Ohio right before his eyes and from that hour he

vowed eternal vengeance on the redskins, a vow that he kept with unrelenting hatred. He roamed the woods from morning until night with his trusty rifle in hand, and as settlers came he moved still farther into the forest, the better to satisfy his love for hunting and his desire to keep that terrible vow he made in childhood.

I will speak of Mr. Arthur Coe, a brother-in-law of Mr. Coon Redner, who came in the fall of 1833. Mr. Coe did not come until 1835 and he bought land on Section Two, York township of the two settlers that were here when we came in 1833 and their names were Allbrow, a father and son. After his first purchase, Mr. Coe bought more land, so at the time of his death he owned nearly six hundred acres of good farming land. His family consisted of four sons and four daughters and himself and wife. The children were all married, two sons and one daughter with their father and mother have passed away at different dates.

I will now speak of the first township meeting held in the town of York at the House of Noah Wolcotts at a small place called Mooreville, so named because a number of families of that name had settled there at this township. Hon. William Moore was elected supervisor, and Othniel Gooding, Township Clerk; Dr. Bowers was practicing physician living at Mooreville. He also kept a dry goods store. I will now relate a little incident that I heard Mr. Woolcott tell in his hotel at Mooreville about the year 1839 or 40. There was a certain man in the township of York about that time who had married a wife living in one of the neighboring towns and he was anxious to bring her home with a good horse team in good style, and in those days such teams were scarce and not easily got, although Mr. Woolcott was fortunate enough to own one and the bridegroom being well acquainted with him ventured to ask him for his team for that occasion. His wife happened

to be a good size woman weighing nearly 300 pounds. Mr. Wolcott says "Yes, sir, you can have my team on condition that you do as I tell you. I say you must not bring her all at one load." I was well acquainted with the wedded pair but I decline to mention names but suffice to say the team was not used on that occasion. This Noah Wolcott that I refer to as keeping the hotel in Mooreville has some descendants now living in the little village of Milan, Michigan.

I will now say a few words about my father who was Frederick Bason, familiarly called by neighbors and settlers "Uncle Fred." He came first to Michigan a viewing the year before we moved here and then he bought four eighty acre lots from the government LandOffice then located at Detroit. And when he moved his family here the next year he bought 240 acres more of the parties I have mentioned before in this narrative joining

some of the land he bought of the government the year before we moved here; and in the year 1835 my father bought another eighty acres of land of one of our neighbors by the name of Taylor Stuart. That made him the owner of six hundred and forty acres, all joining, excepting one eighty acres of timbered land, lying on what is known as the Ridge Road, and is the land now owned by Mr. Othniel Gooding southwest of the Stoney Creek Creamery on the ridge road towards Mooreville. My father sold that eighty acres of land to Mr. Elzathan Gooding who was the father of the present owner in the year 1839 or 40, as I remember it now, and my father gave the eighty acres that he bought of Mr. Stuart to my oldest brother, Samuel, who has passed away at about the age of eighty years. The farm here referred to is now occupied and owned by Mr. Lewis Laffin on section one in Township of York, where he and his family now live.

My father drew a small pension up to the time of his death, having been a soldier in the war 1812. I well remember hearing him say with reference to one of the engagements he was in that he thought some of them shot rather carelessly, for one of their bullets splintered his tomahawk handle in his belt by his side. When I first remember him, when I was six years or seven years old, in the state of New York, he was captain of a rifle company, in town of Poultney, Steuben County. Which office he resigned when he moved to Michigan in 1833. I will say here that from the time of my first recollection it was the law that all abled bodied male citizens of the United States between the age of eighteen and forty-five years was required to do military duty five days in every year known as company training days, which was still the law when I reached my eighteenth year and in the year 1842 I joined the rifle company of the township of York, and in the spring of 1844 I was elected

first lieutenant of the company and my commission was sent to me by John S. Barry, who was then governor of the State of Michigan, but about or near the year 1848 this law was repealed. I had a brother William who was over two years older than I but we resembled each other so closely that some of the people thought we were twins. We could wear each others clothes and they fitted well on either. At a proper age we both married at different dates. And in time his family consisted of four daughters, and one boy baby but ten days old when the mother died in the year 1859, which was a terrible stroke to my brother. At that time the oldest girl was about twelve years old and the youngest daughter was about eighteen months old when their mother passed away. He kept the children together and lived to see them all settled in life but he himself became nearly helpless with rheumatism and other ailments before he

passed away in the year 1900 at the age of seventy nine years. He lived around among his children as he wished, and died at the home of the second daughters, Mrs. Frank Johnson, and is laid to rest in the Stoney Creek Cemetery by the side of his wife, the mother of his children.

I will now say a few words regarding myself. When I was about twenty-two years old the daughter of Andrew Rogers became my wife and we lived happily together for twenty-five years, then death took her from my embrace which left me alone as we had no children. But in time I married again, a second cousin to my first wife, by the name of Rogers also, and we lived happily together for thirty years, then she too passed away, three years ago last May which leaves me alone again. But through the kindness of my niece the youngest daughter of my brother William, I am offered a home at her house, she

being the wife of Thomas Rowe, the laundryman, on Detroit Street in the city of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County and State of Michigan. I try to help some in the laundry what I can but it is not generally expected that a young lad like me (only eighty-five years old) can do much anyway, yet I have to bear the accusation of being the smartest acting man and a man of the best memory of any one of my age, that is known in this community. And I will say that I am usually healthy, and no organic disease of any kind lurking about me that I know of unless it is a streak of laziness and I am willing to take the opinion of those that know me best and call their decision final.

Erastus W. Basom,

Eighty-five years old.

Who is the Author and writer of this
narrative in the year 1909.

